

REMARKS

Claims 27-31 are now pending in the application. Claims 1-26 have been canceled, and claims 27-31 newly added. Favorable reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Applicants present herein the Abstract on a separate sheet as requested by the Examiner.

I. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1, 12 AND 21-26 UNDER 35 USC §102(b)

Claims 1-26 are replaced herein with claims relating to the corresponding Japanese Application No. 2004-546427.

A feature of the invention is that, in comparing a maximum pattern length and a minimum pattern length, a binary signal (Viterbi decoding, for example) converted by a maximum likelihood decoding section is used to detect the maximum pattern length while a binary signal (Viterbi decoding, for example) converted by a maximum likelihood decoding section is not used to detect the maximum pattern length (i.e., a multiple bit digital signal having suppressed low noise component, before which the conversion by the maximum likelihood decoding section is performed, is used). This is described, for example, on page 53, line 28 to page 54, line 4 of WO 2004/038719).

As described above, a binary signal (Viterbi decoding, for example) converted by a maximum likelihood decoding section is used to detect the maximum pattern length while a binary signal (Viterbi decoding, for example) converted by a maximum likelihood decoding section is not used to detect the maximum pattern length, and under the condition that a recording medium in which a distance between symbols of data (the longest data is 8T) and a synchronization pattern (9T) is close and the synchronization pattern is a format including 2T9T9T, the maximum pattern length and the maximum pattern length can be detected more accurately even if the cycle of the clock signal significantly shifts from the standard cycle T. (refer to page 55, lines 1-12 of WO

2004/03719).

Reed et al. does not disclose or suggest the invention as recited in claims 27-31. Nor does Reed et al. teach or suggest its associated advantages.

III. CONCLUSION

Accordingly, all claims 27-31 are believed to be allowable and the application is believed to be in condition for allowance. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner feel that a telephone interview would be helpful to facilitate favorable prosecution of the above-identified application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Should a petition for an extension of time be necessary for the timely reply to the outstanding Office Action (or if such a petition has been made and an additional extension is necessary), petition is hereby made and the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees (including additional claim fees) to Deposit Account No. 18-0988.

Respectfully submitted,

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